



Iowa Smart Planning Task Force Meeting October 20, 2010 Meeting Notes

Attendees (*indicates telephonic participation)

Task Force Members:

Les Beck, Iowa State Association of Counties; Charles Connerly, University of Iowa*; Bill Ehm, Department of Natural Resources; Teri Goodman, City of Dubuque*; Bruce Greiner, Office of Energy Independence; Heather Hackbarth, Department of Management; Rick Hunsaker, Iowa Association of Regional Councils*; Jessica Hyland Harder, Iowa League of Cities; State Senator, Pam Jochum (D); Chad Kuene, North Liberty; Pam Myhre, Mason City; Carey Nagle, American Institute of Architects; Wayne Petersen, Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship; Ruth Randleman, Carlisle; Nancy Richardson, Department of Transportation; Emily Shields, Rebuild Iowa Office; Gary Taylor, Iowa State University; Donald Temeyer, Black Hawk County; State Representative Nick Wagner, (R)*; David Wilwerding, American Planning Association

Other Attendees:

Jerry Skalak, USACE-Rock Island District*; Eric Abrams, Iowa Department of Transportation; Marie Steenlage, IDIED; Sue Lerdal, LSA; Theresa Kehoe, Senate Democrats; Jace Mikels, Senate Democrats; Sam Wagner, Sioux City; Tony Phillips, House Republicans; Mary Beth Mellick, Iowa State Association of Counties; Bill Freeland, House Democrat Caucus Staff; Mike Ludwig, City of Des Moines; John McCurdy, SWIPCO; Darrell Hanson, IUB; LaVon Griffieon, 1000 Friends of Iowa; Brent D. Nelson, Sioux City

Supporting Staff:

Nichole Warren, IARC; Aaron Todd, RIO; Annette Mansheim, RIO; Jenna Anderson, RIO; Susan Judkins Jostens, RIO; Liz Van Zomeren, RIO

Welcome

Ruth Randleman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Approval of Sept. 15, 2010, Meeting Notes

Minutes approved by voice vote.

Public Comment

Ruth Randleman asked if anyone in attendance or on the phone wished to speak before the Task Force. No one requested to speak.

Discussion of Public Comments Received & Revision to Recommendations

Aaron Todd, RIO, gave a power point presentation reviewing the public input received and identified remaining questions and concerns to be addressed by the Task Force.

Ruth Randleman polled the group and asked if the themes had been captured correctly. Nancy Richardson said that this list represents a manageable core set of concerns and issues to focus on for consistency and commonality and that the wording needs to express what the Task Force means. Emily Shields, RIO, stated that where it specifically mentions flooding, it should be changed to "all hazards" because we want to encourage communities to plan for all types of disasters. She further said that "watershed" should be used only where it is applicable.

Don Temeyer asked if there had been enough public comment acknowledging Sioux City's letter. He said that the Task Force needs to listen to concerns and that there were 58 respondents. He encouraged keeping the public process moving and that the Task Force was moving with a short time frame. Nancy Richardson said that the Task Force took on a representative form and that not every jurisdiction had a representative but was represented by organizations such as the League of Cities. A representative from Sioux City said he disagreed with that comment.

Ruth Randleman said that public input does not stop now but will be ongoing and legislation outlined the appointments to the Task Force. She said that the Task Force was very open and asked for broad participation. She said that she is satisfied at this point that there were opportunities for public input and that the Task Force should stick to the November 15th deadline. Nancy Richardson said that the Task Force will make sure that concerns about the timeframe are clearly discussed and that there will continue to be more input now and going forward. Les Beck said that all notices, survey links, etc. were sent out to list serve groups and constituent organizations and numerous attempts were made to distribute and solicit feedback. He noted that not a lot of feedback was provided to date, but he is comfortable with that attempt made and cautioned that it is important to stick to the November 15 deadline.

Chad Kuene said that the overall points were themes that need to be further honed and that it was a good place to move forward from those listed.

The consensus was to move forward with the list outlined in the PowerPoint presentation.

Suggested Revisions

Recommendation 1.1

The consensus was to revise as follows:

21 Coordinating Council with the following members:

- Iowa Association of Regional Councils (1)
- Iowa League of Cities (3) (small, medium and large communities)
- Iowa State Association of Counties (2) (1 rural, 1 urban)
- Regents Universities (3)
- State Department Directors or Representatives (7)
- Appointed by Governor (5)

Appointments should be coordinated to ensure geographic equity.

Establish two technical committees (GIS and planning)

Preference for the OPGIS to be independent

Recommendation 1.2– No revisions.

Recommendation 1.3 and 1.4— incorporate into recommendation #2

Recommendations 1.6

Aaron Todd reviewed the suggested changes to this section. It was suggested that “goals and benchmarks’ be added to the last paragraph to be more specific. Other changes approved:

- Replace goal 3.2.1 to state: “Decrease in the growth rate of vehicle miles traveled.”
- Add new goal 3.2.4: “Increase in the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built.”

Recommendation 2

Nancy Richardson said that local communities can do their own plans and choose to ask the COGs for assistance. The COG's role is to review the local plan to determine if it qualifies as a smart plan. Their role is to work with the local jurisdictions to create a regional plan. Rick Hunsaker said that the COG would review the local plan and would "qualify" it as a smart plan by issuing a letter so that they can receive incentives by demonstrating that they have a smart plan. Teri Goodmann said that it's important that the COG is advisory and does not have an approval role since it is the local government that is elected. Nancy Richardson said that the other option considered was to have the state review the local plans rather than the COGs. Pam Myhre suggested that the name be changed to Plan Review Committee to avoid the acronym "PAC". Teri Goodmann said that the purpose of the qualification of the plan as a smart plan was to expedite a path. Nancy Richardson said that is important to be careful how the qualification process is explained. Jessica Hyland Harder said that the qualification is to stick to the legislation and have in the plan the elements and the hazard mitigation components that define a smart plan. The question was raised what the alternative to a COG would be in Central Iowa. Mike Ludwig from Des Moines said that there are already regional entities for central Iowa that could form a committee to do regional planning for the area. He said there is apprehension about forming a new COG. Nancy Richardson said that for the central Iowa-Des Moines area it could be possible to recognize another non-COG entity that covers all of the counties. Mike Ludwig said that the MPO does not have the staff to do regional planning and would need expanded capacity. Ruth Randleman suggested that for planning purposes they could use consultants. They would then need an entity to review the smart plans. Les Beck said to address the concerns raised by cities that border other states that the Plan Review Committee could be specifically composed of Iowans. Carey Nagle said that there could be another compliance path for COGs that cross state boundaries. John McCurdy said that they could be advisory but not voting members. Nancy Richardson stated that there could be a separate path and that Iowa residents would do the plan review.

Aaron Todd then polled the group about timeframes. Rick Hunsaker said that in the first five years there probably would not be a lot of cross pollination of planning efforts because both the local governments and COGs would be preparing smart plans. Over the long term it would become more beneficial and more sharing between plans would occur in terms of how they affect one another. Rick Hunsaker said that he preferred to not be too prescriptive in case COGs that cross state lines want advisory input. Sioux City representatives questioned having the local plan reviewed by the COG and described the perceived conflict with contracting for mitigation projects and then asking to qualify for smart plans. Nancy Richardson said that the alternative was to have the state review 1,000 local plans for smart planning. Nichole Warren said that there could be a separate committee within the region that could be charged with review, not only COG staff. Jenna Anderson reminded the Task Force members that there would be an appeal process. Jessica Hyland Harder said that the purpose of qualifying as a smart plan is to help communities expedite their plans, not create a burden or become too onerous. If it wasn't there then each state agency within their own grant process could review it themselves. Nichole Warren said that the intent is to encourage dialogue from a planning standpoint and that planning at the local and regional level would occur concurrently. Nancy Richardson stated that COG review of the local plans would be done on behalf of the state and the regional plan would be reviewed with all jurisdictions, similar to how the DOT does transportation planning today. It was suggested that there needs to be language added that only Iowans would have oversight on the recommendations.

The consensus was to stay with the COG model for Smart Plan review, let Central Iowa use the MPO or another identified entity for regional planning and Smart Plan review, have plan review done by Iowans within the Plan Review Committees with an appeal process.

Recommendation 3.1- No revisions.

Recommendation 3.2

Don Temeyer commented that regional plans are multi-jurisdictional. Other funding opportunities should be identified.

Recommendation 3.3

Nancy Richardson asked if the Task Force should talk about how much funding and quantify it today. Jessica Hyland Harder said that estimated comp plan costs should be included. Aaron Todd said that data is available that shows that plan costs range from \$10,000 to \$100,000. Nancy Richardson said that the Legislative process includes a fiscal note and the Task Force could allow them to prepare that information. Teri Goodmann said that local governments are judicious and that the challenge is funding for implementation. Bruce Greiner raised concerns about including the example of the energy tax and said that he could not support 3.3 on page 28 of the report. John McCurdy said that the real estate transfer tax was more equitable and much less than what other states charge. Ruth Randleman stated that there would always be push back and that these were examples and that this is not an exhaustive list. Bruce Greiner said that existing budgets could be reduced to pay for planning and Don Temeyer indicated that that was the same position as Farm Bureau. Nancy Richardson said that IDOT is already subsidizing local planning. Bruce Greiner suggested including a propane tax if the idea was about taxing consumption. Pam Myhre asked if consumption was the problem and said that this is an effort to reduce the carbon footprint through smart planning. Discussion ensued about return on investment and whether to include specific or generic examples of possible funding sources. It was suggested that a fee or tax could be placed on water.

It was suggested to have as many options as possible and be as exhaustive as possible and develop a matrix of funding sources as was done with the Time 21 report.

Recommendation 3.4- No revisions.

Recommendation 3.5-

The consensus was to use “additional consideration” rather than a threshold requirement.

Recommendation 3.6 and 3.7- Merge.

Recommendation 3.8— No revision.

Recommendation 4

Bill Ehm reviewed the handout and the action steps. He discussed value stream mapping, identifying gaps and overlaps, and the “80/20” rule. Ruth Randleman said that it answered questions and showed that we can use existing talent to address watershed issues. Wayne Petersen noted the wording in the title—there are 6 major river basins and 3 rivers. Bill Ehm mentioned the original IDALS 2000 report and explained that there would be an exchange of information between watershed planning and the COGs. Nichole Warren said that the information could be incorporated into the regional plans. Chad K. said that this should help to get funding and that we are keeping spending minimal by using what we have. A question was raised about including the Missouri River basin. Bill Ehms said that there were huge issues along the Missouri and Mississippi River and that the USACE cannot come to agreement on the Missouri River. He said that this approach addresses the interior watershed areas and that it leaves the major rivers alone. He further said that areas are constantly updating and cited Ames as an example. Teri Goodmann said that cities brag that they are where jobs are created but we need to realize that

agriculture is the backbone of our economy and that we need to address watershed and land use issues and manage what happens upstream. Ruth Randleman also mentioned drainage districts. Les Beck said that watershed planning needs to be linked to regional planning and there needs to be action steps to institutionalize a relationship. They need to be at the table for technical or review committees.

Bill Ehm and Wayne Peterson will continue to refine this recommendation.

Recommendation 5— No revisions.

Next Steps

The schedule was then discussed. The Task Force was asked to prioritize recommendations and send their rankings to Aaron Todd. The first report draft will be sent out to Task Force members the first week of November with at least 48 hours to review and provide feedback. Comments will then be integrated into the final draft, which will be presented at the November 10th meeting.

Other Issues

No directives.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.